

Claims

[c1]

A system of incoming mail receptacles for detecting hazards in a mail piece and notifying users including senders and recipients having quarantined mail comprising:

a plurality of incoming mail receptacles each including a hazard detector for triggering a mail piece quarantine system for the mailbox, an image scanner for scanning the face of a mail piece, a communications system, and a scan detection system for providing source and recipient information for quarantined mail pieces;

a server connected to the plurality of incoming mail receptacles for receiving scan detection data and determining a notification method and for communicating the notification to the sender and the recipient.

[c2]

The system of claim 1 further comprising:

a secure internet connection between each incoming mail receptacle and the server.

[c3]

A method for communicating a quarantine condition to users including senders and recipients of a mail system having a plurality of incoming mail receptacles with hazard detection systems connected to a central server comprising:

detecting the presence of a mail piece;

detecting sender and recipient information from a mail piece;

testing the mail piece for hazards;

alerting the central server upon detection of a hazard and providing source information to the central server;

determining a notification method;

notifying at least one user of the mail piece quarantine.

[c4]

The system of claim 3 wherein the source detection includes detecting a destination address.

[c5]

The system of claim 3 wherein the source detection includes detecting a return address.

[c6]

The system of claim 3 wherein the determination of a notification method

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comprises determining if a valid email address is available for the user.

[c7] The system of claim 3 wherein the determination of a notification method comprises determining if a valid telephone number is available for the user.

[c8] The system of claim 3 wherein the determination of a notification method comprises determining if the envelope address is a valid postal address for the user.

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